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ABSTRACT

Two years of language study is a requirement in most colleges and universities for many degree programs and, at the high school level, an expectation for college-bound students. However, some very capable students with specific learning disabilities (SLD) have difficulty learning a second language. Recent research has identified characteristics of students with language-based learning disabilities and of students who are successful language learners. It has also identified some of the problems the former group of students may encounter in the second-language classroom. The characteristics of the disabilities are diverse and do not fit a single profile, but some typical patterns have emerged. Colleges and universities have begun to develop formalized procedures to provide these students with needed services and course alternatives. Students can be taught adaptive cognitive strategies to apply to foreign language learning, in effect teaching the students how to learn language-related skills. This, along with the provision of academic options for SLD students having difficulty with language requirements, is a logical direction for foreign language education to take. (MSE)

3 Profiles of Frustration: Second Language Learners with Specific Learning Disabilities

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The coordinator for learning disabilities stopped the foreign language teacher educator in the hall at lunchtime. "Do you have a minute? I'd like to discuss a student with you. John, a Spanish 201 student, came to me very concerned that he will not be able to meet the language requirement. He is a serious student, whose overall average is good; he earned an "A" on his neurophysiology exam last week. But intermediate level Spanish has totally frustrated him. He said that he's not going to pass the course. This is the second language that he's tried."

An uncommon story? Not as rare as one might hope. And, in this instance, the student may choose to deny himself his only recourse—going through the procedure that might allow for course substitutions—for two reasons. First, he doesn't want to ask his parents to pay for the extensive testing required by the university to authenticate a learning disability, and, second, he doesn't believe he has a learning disability because he is an above-average student in other areas. The urgency of his predicament had brought him to the Office of Learning Assistance. What are his options? Presently, at the university, he must either be tested and identified as having a learning disability in order to enroll in substitute courses, fulfill the language requirement, or change majors.

Second Language Learning: The Dilemma of the Student with Special Needs

Considerable national attention is presently being directed toward the development of proficiency in a second language. Increasingly, states and school districts are providing opportunities for all students (K–12) to study a second language. In the fall of 1987, two large city school districts—Kansas City, Missouri, and Columbus, Ohio—opened immersion schools at the grade school level that will allow for articulated second language study throughout a student's educational experience. When any or all students may choose to study a second language or are required to do so in order to meet a language requirement, it becomes increasingly important that language teachers recognize learner differences in order to adopt approaches to the teaching-learning process that will enable each student to achieve his or her potential.

It is estimated that 2 to 3 percent of the national population is "highly gifted." Another 5 percent of the population is served in classes for learning disabled students in public schools (Lerner, 23). The gifted have generally been encouraged to study a foreign language; however, this second group, students with specific learning disabilities (SLD), is a new population in the second language classroom—one that is "at-risk" for learning a second language if its special learning characteristics and needs are not considered (Cohen, 5; Fisher, 8; Gajar, 11; Ganschow and Sparks, 14; Ganschow, Sparks, and Myer, 16). In increasing numbers, SLD students are now attending colleges and universities, and many are enrolled in college preparatory programs in high school ("Learning Disability Update," 24). At Ohio State University, from 1981 to 1985, there was an increase from ninety students identified as learning disabled to 450 being served by the Office of Disability Services (Languis and Block, 22). In both the secondary school and university environments, SLD students are frequently expected to fulfill a second language requirement.

Two years of a second language study is a requirement in most colleges and universities for many degree programs and, at the high school level, an expectation for most college-bound students. The study of a second language may provide rich cultural and linguistic insights for students at every age level. Some very capable students, however, have

great difficulty in learning a second language. There is an identifiable "at-risk" population for learning a second language—students with specific learning disabilities (SLD). The SLD population is described as having primary language difficulties, which are likely to impede their ability to master a second language (Cohen, 5; Geschwind, 17; Wiig and Semel, 31; Wren, 32).

Definition of Specific Learning Disabilities

The following working definition of a learning disability, provided by Dr. Melvin Levine of Boston Children's Hospital, is in keeping with the official federal definition found in Public Law 94-142:

> "Learning disability" is the term currently used to describe a handicap that interferes with someone's ability to store, process, or produce information. Such disabilities can affect both children and adults. The impairment can be quite subtle and may go undetected throughout life. But learning disabilities create a gap between a person's true capacity and his day-to-day productivity and performance (Levine, 25, p. 3).

Central to Levine's definition of learning disability are these ideas:

1. A learning disability is a difficulty in processing information that results in a gap between capacity and performance.
2. A learning disability can occur at various points in processing—at the intake, retrieval, or production levels.
3. A learning disability can remain undetected in childhood or adulthood.

Our purpose in the following pages is threefold: (1) to describe characteristics of students with specific learning disabilities that are language based and the problems they may encounter in the second language classroom, (2) to discuss formal identification procedures at the college level, and (3) to explore alternatives for meeting the needs of this population "at-risk" in second language classrooms.

Studies of High-Risk Language Learners

From informal observations of Harvard students who were unable to pass the university foreign language requirement, Dinklage (7) postulated three types of high-risk language learners and compared their learning difficulties to existing studies on dyslexia or specific language disability. The most common type of disability, encompassing 1 to 2 percent of the students in a typical Harvard foreign language class, Dinklage classified as *strephosymbolia*—a word coined by Samuel Orton (Critchley, 3). Symptoms of strephosymbolia include histories of difficulties learning to read and spell, reversal of letters and syllables, right/left confusions, and family histories of similar problems.

A second, less clear-cut type of disability included students with audio-lingual deficits. These individuals had difficulty with the auditory discrimination of sounds, of syllables, and of words. A third type of student exhibited a deficiency related to the audio-lingual deficit—problems with auditory memory. In giving back auditory information, these students scramble, shuffle, and insert words, resulting in random combinations. Most students with auditory memory difficulties also experienced audio-lingual deficits, according to Dinklage, although a few did not.

Dinklage suggested that a visual presentation or a combined auditory/visual approach might allow students with audio-lingual deficits to experience success. He was less optimistic as to the prognosis for strephosymbolics. It is reasonable to assume that students with auditory memory deficits may have decided limitations in listening comprehension and speaking skills in the foreign language classroom.

The "subtypes" defined by Dinklage resemble other classifications of subtypes of learning disabilities (Boder, 2; Fox and Routh, 9; Rourke, 29). Most such classifications describe (1) visual/spatial difficulties, (2) auditory difficulties, especially phonological-coding problems, i.e., the "inability to represent and access the sound of a word in order to help remember the word" (Vellutino, 30), and (3) mixed visual/spatial and auditory difficulties. The largest subgroup includes individuals with phonological problems (60-70 percent). Recently, researchers have argued that what was thought to be a visual/spatial difficulty is, in fact, a "... symptom of dysfunction during storage and retrieval of linguistic

information" rather than "a defect in the visual system" (Vellutino, 30, p. 34).

Dinklage observed a select group of students who closely resemble students across the nation currently being identified as having specific learning disabilities. Most of these students had entered Harvard with "undetected" learning disabilities; it was not until they experienced failure in learning a second language that they came to the attention of counselors. Upon investigation, these students' very early histories of learning difficulties were discovered, having been masked by great effort, high intelligence, and years of working in the English language. Faced with the new symbol system of the second language, these bright individuals manifested the handicap again; they were unable to store, process, or produce information in the new symbol system. In most cases, their academic performance in other areas was superior. They matched very closely the criteria of a learning disability as defined by Levine.

In a description of four case studies of college students with suspected learning disabilities, Ganschow and Sparks (15) noted several characteristics similar to those of students in the Dinklage study. These students had histories of early reading and spelling difficulties in English. They had difficulties with listening comprehension and grammatical aspects of the foreign language as indicated in the results of the Listening and Grammar subtests of the Test of Adolescent Language. Also, all four students had large discrepancies (over twenty standard score points) among scores on standardized tests of various academic areas, e.g., mathematics, general knowledge, spelling, math. Such high performance in one academic content area and much lower achievement in selected content such as math or spelling suggests the possibility of a learning disability.

In another study, Ganschow and Sparks (13) developed a questionnaire to predict students likely to be at risk for learning a second language. It included items related to ease of learning to read and spell in English, to do arithmetic, family history of learning problems, difficulty with English in high school, and former history of second language learning difficulties. The questionnaire was administered to students enrolled in audio-lingual sections of first semester Spanish at the university level.

Identified by the Ganschow and Sparks questionnaire, eighteen low-risk and seventeen high-risk students were administered the Test of Adolescent Language (TOAL) (Hammill, et al., 19), an indicator of expressive and receptive language performance in oral and written modes. Thirteen SLD students who were not enrolled in second language study were also given the TOAL and the questionnaire. Low-risk, high-risk, and SLD students were compared in their performance on the TOAL. Statistical analyses revealed significant differences between low-risk and SLD students in listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as in the overall Adolescent Language Quotient. Significant differences resulted between high-risk and SLD students on measures of speaking, reading, and the overall Adolescent Language Quotient. There were no significant differences, however, between high-risk and SLD students on eight of twelve individual subtests. These findings suggest that there may be subtle language proficiency differences that distinguish high-risk and low-risk students. A high drop-out rate (35 percent) of students by the end of second semester Spanish was noted among those identified by the questionnaire as high-risk, although there were no significant differences between low-risk and high-risk students on SAT/ACT scores. The two groups seemed comparable, yet the questionnaire identified areas relevant to language learning that distinguished unsuccessful students.

Two recent studies have examined the Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) (Carroll and Sapon, 4) as part of the diagnostic assessments for identifying students who will have difficulty learning a second language (Gajar, 11; Demuth and Smith, 6). Gajar compared MLAT scores of fifty-one students diagnosed as having learning disabilities and a random sample of fifty students enrolled in French, German, or Spanish at Pennsylvania State University. Students with learning disabilities scored significantly lower ($p<.001$) on all five subtests of the MLAT. Demuth and Smith, using the MLAT with other assessments, have found it "a very reliable element" (6, p. 71) in screening students for an alternative to meeting the foreign language requirement at Boston University. (The alternate sequence of courses will be discussed later in this paper.)

The studies we have presented describe characteristics of students with language learning disabilities. The following study reports characteristics of successful language learners.

Profiles of Successful Language Learners

In an investigation of auditory foreign language aptitude and achievement, Myer (27) describes characteristics of successful second language learners. The study focuses on aptitude and achievement in auditory discrimination, sound-symbol correspondence, and listening comprehension. (See Appendix A for a listing of the variables included in the research.) Achievement in French, German, or Spanish was assessed by discrete auditory discrimination and comprehension test items, as well as listening in combination with reading and writing. The strengths of the successful second language learner based on the results of this study are strikingly similar to the areas of weakness that compose a generalized profile of students with specific learning disabilities.

Based on the Myer data, the following profile characterizes a hypothetical *student with high auditory foreign language aptitude:* a student who *spells well*, has *musical aptitude* in *tonal* discrimination and in *rhythmic* perception, has good overall *math* ability, *discriminates auditory stressed syllables well*, and has good *overall English language skills* (including spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and the use of words).

The profile of a *successful foreign language learner*, one who excels in auditory second language achievement, would be a student who performs well on two measures of the *auditory discrimination of syllables*, i.e., detecting the number of syllables heard and which syllable is the stressed one. In addition, according to the Myer study, this student achieves in *spelling*, in *math concepts*, and scores high on a measure of auditory foreign language aptitude sound/symbol association (Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery).

When findings based on group data are discussed in terms of individual cases, the statements can only be considered hypothetical. It follows, however, that from such group data, valuable information can be obtained about those who learn easily in the auditory activities associated with second language learning. Of particular interest is the importance of the ability to discriminate auditory syllables well; assessed at the end of grade 7, *auditory syllable discrimination* served as the best predictor of performance on measures of foreign language achievement

in German, French, and Spanish at the beginning of second year language study in grade 10. This auditory discrimination skill is one that is frequently deficient in students with specific learning disabilities.

Profiles of Three High-Risk Foreign Language Learners

In the case studies below, three typical profiles of students who unsuccessfully attempted to meet the foreign language requirement are presented. These students were referred to the specialist in learning disabilities at their university for consultation regarding diagnostic testing.

Case Study 1

I.Q.: High-average range
Languages Attempted: High school Latin (two years); Latin, Russian, and Spanish at the university
Language Learning Problems: Auditory memory, auditory sequencing
Strengths: Superior compensatory strategies, ability to derive meaning from written text

Case study 1 had no prior history of learning difficulties in school. In college he was referred for testing because of his inability to pass the language requirement. The student had taken two years of Latin in high school and passed because, in his words: "The focus of the course was on mythology and reading, not speaking the language." He had tried three languages in college, but was unable to fulfill the two-year requirement in the same language for a degree in Arts and Science. The battery of tests given to identify SLD students did not reveal a specific learning disability, i.e., there were no pronounced discrepancies between his academic potential and his overall grade point average as evaluated by the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (WAIS-R). All test results indicated that he was in the average to above-average range. Furthermore, his college performance was commensurate with his test scores in all subjects but foreign language. Upon discovery that the student had considerable articulation difficulties as a youngster, he was administered a battery of auditory tests and was found to do poorly in sound imitation

and blending tasks. Self-reports about the nature of this student's difficulties with foreign language courses suggested that he had problems with the "sequence" of the language structures, i.e., he knew the right words, but did not know how to arrange them in the appropriate order. Furthermore, he was unable to utilize clues provided by word endings and was reduced to "memorizing vocabulary words." When he listened to the language, the sounds and words blended together for him. This student appeared to have an audio-lingual deficit affecting his ability to hear and/or sequence auditory information, as well as difficulties with auditory memory for language. Given familiar native language contexts and superior compensatory strategies, however, this problem had gone undetected until he took a second language.

Case Study 2

I.Q.: Superior range
Languages Attempted: No high school language experience; Spanish (failed first semester at the university)
Language Learning Problems: Difficulty hearing, reading, and spelling the language
Strengths: Personal communication skills in English, perseverance; learns best through graphic visual aids

Case study 2 had a long history of school-related problems. She was not diagnosed as having a specific learning disability until college, when she was referred because of inability to pass the foreign language requirement. Particular problems in the student's early years were seen in math, especially algebra. She had switched majors in college because of inability to fulfill the math requirement in her selected major. She also dropped out of school for a semester because of her frustration with the language requirement. This student demonstrated clear-cut signs of a specific learning disability in her test results. The student's full scale IQ was in the superior range; yet discrepancies of 1.5 to 2 standard deviations were seen between her potential (IQ) and academic performance in reading (word attack), spelling, arithmetic, written language, and listening skills. The student described herself as one who learned best through discussion groups and visual aids, such as pictures, charts, and

graphs. She felt that her ability to organize and her personal communication skills were strengths that enabled her to be successful in her major. In second language learning, however, she said she was able neither to hear nor to read the language, no matter how hard she tried. This student of superior intelligence was unable to get through even the first semester of the language, despite intensive studying and tutoring. She appeared to fit characteristics described by Dinklage in the syndrome of strephosymbolia.

Case Study 3

I.Q.: High-average
Languages Attempted: No high school language experience; Spanish at the university (credit/no credit)
Language Learning Problems: Difficulties in deriving meaning from grammatical details
Strengths: Good listening skills in English; grasps holistic meanings

Case study 3 had a strong academic average in math and science and above-average ability as measured by the WAIS-R. His family history showed siblings with reading and spelling problems, and he himself had an early history of being in special reading classes. The student had a B+ average in college and was fearful of hurting his high average with poor grades in a foreign language. After several semesters of unsuccessful credit/no credit Spanish classes, the student was referred for testing. Results indicated primary difficulties with the "surface" features of written language, revealed in the student's inability to detect errors in spelling and grammar and to use proper punctuation and spelling in written work. Tests of the student's visual processing and reading indicated slow processing speed. When the student described his problems with foreign language, he related difficulties in attending to "details," such as word endings and parts of speech. In contrast to the previous two case studies, this student performed well in listening comprehension and speaking but had difficulty in the surface features of the written language.

Procedures for Identifying High-Risk Students

The preceding profiles of high-risk second language learners represent increasing numbers of students in our classrooms. To provide students with needed services and alternatives, formalized procedures are necessary.

Central to any plan for helping students who may have difficulty in meeting a language requirement at the university level is a formalized procedure for identification of "at-risk" students. An evaluation procedure in effect at Boston University includes an initial interview, the completion of a two-page questionnaire by the student, the completion of a two-page questionnaire by the student's foreign language teacher, the completion of the Modern Language Aptitude Test, and a second interview for making a decision about the language studies appropriate to the student (Demuth and Smith, 6, p. 69).

At the University of Pennsylvania, students who petition a language requirement substitution must document an "earnest and uninterrupted effort" to learn a language by supplying letters from the language instructors, are interviewed by the vice-dean for language instruction, and upon recommendation of the vice-dean may be interviewed and tested (Freed, 10, p. 16). Unfortunately, even when a formal process is in place, the student who petitions for a waiver or substitution has frequently endured failure or sacrificed grades in other courses in an effort to meet the language requirement.

At Ohio State University approximately 25 percent of the 450 identified learning disabled students on campus in 1986 had been diagnosed prior to their enrollment at the university (Languis and Block, 22); previously identified students are asked to provide recent documentation of their disability once at the university. For those students, the opportunity to benefit from second language is provided through alternatives chosen from specified courses in the numerous languages that may satisfy the language requirement. Clearly, the position taken at Ohio State is one that values the rich linguistic and cultural understandings that the study of a second language may engender, yet recognizes the limitations of students with learning disabilities. Access to language experiences is provided through numerous support services and course alternatives.

Ohio State students who have not been diagnosed but whose performance indicates the possible presence of a learning disability are referred to the Office of Disability Services. Foreign language faculty are among those who refer a large number of students. The evaluation process provided by the university generally proceeds as follows:

1. The student calls for an appointment.
2. A counselor meets with the student in an hour-long appointment during which a comprehensive case history is taken, including the student's academic, medical, and family history. In addition, a checklist of study habits is completed. The counselor determines if the student should be tested for a learning disability.
3. A minimum of six hours of testing is administered over a three-day period by staff members. Each student is given the Woodcook-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery (Parts I and II), the Diagnostic Reading Test, the Trailmaking Test, from the Halstead Reitan Battery, the WAIS-R, and informal reading and writing assessments.
4. A diagnostic staff meeting is held to determine if the student has a learning disability. Additional tests may be recommended if a determination is not made based on the interview and required testing. These may include the Benton Visual Retention Test, Central Auditory Testing, the MLAT, and informal visual and auditory assessments.
5. An interpretation meeting is held between the student and the initial counselor to review test results. If the student is not assessed as learning disabled, suggestions to improve academic performance are given (e.g., study strategies, available counseling or tutoring). Accommodations for learning disabled students are discussed (e.g., taped textbooks, the use of readers, a scribe, extended time on tests, referrals to classes teaching study skills or writing skills).

The procedures for petitioning alternatives to the regular sequence of courses for the language requirements at the University of Pennsylvania (Freed, 10, p. 16) and Boston University (Demuth and Smith, 6), and

Ohio State University (Languis and Block, 22) all result in case-by-case decisions about the nature of the student's language studies.

Alternative Courses

The alternatives open to students at the university level vary according to the institution. At the University of Pennsylvania, alternative courses equivalent in number to the number of courses in language requirement are substituted when an exemption is granted. The courses are to provide an understanding of foreign languages and cultures, as well as an introduction to foreign literatures (Freed, 10, pp. 16–17).

A sequence of courses at Boston University addresses the needs of students identified for course substitutions, taking into account the difficulty students with language learning disabilities frequently have with auditory processing and production. Language Learning is the first of three courses that "focus more on the written, rather than on the spoken word" (Demuth and Smith, 6, p. 73). Three days a week the classes are devoted to developing an understanding of grammar and "basics of linguistic structure"; in a fourth class French or Spanish issues are discussed, according to the language the student will subsequently study. Course topics include articulatory phonetics, the perception and production of English sounds and Spanish or French sounds, phonology, morphology, syntax in English and French or Spanish, sociolinguistic aspects of language, and a comparison and contrast of first and second language acquisition.

Upon completion of Language Learning, students take two additional courses that develop reading and writing skills. One of the strengths of this alternative course sequence is the very definite contribution toward the building of confidence and positive self-concept that success in *learning how to learn* can produce in a student. The Boston University students who follow the alternative sequence learned "to discriminate, abstract, and analyze with much more depth and accuracy" (Demuth and Smith, 6, p. 75).

Processing Difficulties and Adaptive Cognitive Strategies

In the search for alternatives that will enable students to learn a second language, it seems important to discuss adaptive cognitive strategies that can systematically be taught and applied to the learning of foreign languages. Learning disabled students typically have difficulty in certain learning processes that directly affect language learning.

A checklist of characteristics of learning disabled college students (Mangrum and Strichart, 26, pp. 32–37) lists difficulties in language processes in the students' native language. Included in spoken language difficulties are (1) difficulty in grasping what others say to them, (2) problems in retrieving the appropriate word for a situation, (3) immature syntactical patterns, and (4) inappropriate use of words. Among written language difficulties mentioned by Mangrum and Strichart are (1) imprecise and unclear expression, (2) repeated use of a small variety of sentence structures, (3) incorrect use of punctuation, (4) underutilization of verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. A special category of spelling problems lists (1) transposition of letters, (2) omission or substitution of sounds when spelling words, (3) attempts to phonetically spell irregular words, and (4) general avoidance of writing words that are difficult to spell.

Other cognitive difficulties of a more general nature but directly involved in the development of skills needed in a second language classroom are the following: sequencing events and ideas, understanding abstract concepts, spontaneously employing cognitive strategies, switching strategies as appropriate, distinguishing important from unimportant information, reasoning in a deductive manner, perceiving cause-and-effect relationships, remembering things seen and heard (short and long term), sustaining ideas and information, generalizing skills from one task situation to another (Mangrum and Strichart, 26, p. 32).

A course that focused directly on metacognitive strategies to teach learning disabled college students how to learn has been proposed and subsequently taught by Languis, director of the Brain Behavior Laboratory and professor in the College of Education at Ohio State University (Languis and Block, 22). The intent of this course, titled Learning to

Learn Seminar, was to increase the repertory of learning strategies available to the student and provide insights into application of adaptive strategies to study habits and coursework. In the Learning to Learn course, individual differences in learning style were taken into account, as well as measures of personality, I.Q., and results of other diagnostic tests used in the identification process for learning-disabled students.

To undertake the teaching of adaptive learning strategies now seems to be a logical future step for foreign language educators. Literature on accommodating learning styles in the foreign language classroom and individualizing to meet student needs is adequate. A serious examination of how foreign language educators can address learner diversity through methodological considerations and direct instruction of adaptive learner strategies seems appropriate. Dialogue and collaboration among instructors of second languages and specialists involved with teaching students with specific learning disabilities will expedite this process.

Options for At-Risk Language Learners

Currently there are several options open to students with language-based difficulties who face meeting a second language requirement. To gain the benefits that the study of a second language can provide, students may extend the years of study in excess of a usual program schedule to allow sufficient time to concentrate on a second language or follow an individualized program that allows for variable goal options and a slower pace. Course substitutions can be petitioned. An option that holds promise for the future is an approach that helps students develop metacognitive skills that will enable them to learn a second language. For some students, avoidance of the language requirement by enrolling in programs or institutions that have no language requirement can be an option. It is important that classroom teachers and students, both at the high school and university level be informed of options, policies, and procedures involved in meeting foreign language requirements.

In 1983, a survey of college and university foreign language requirements for SLD students was done at the University of Wisconsin. Of the fifty-three institutions surveyed, fourteen did not have a policy,

nine were in the process of considering one, and thirty-two had implemented a plan for accommodating SLD students (Keeny and Smith, 20). At this writing, the authors of this manuscript are conducting an updated and expanded survey to obtain current information about policies and procedures throughout the nation (Myer and Ganschow, 28).

Meeting the Needs of SLD Students

The promise for meeting the needs of SLD students in the future is encouraging. The work of Ganschow and Sparks (13) in developing a questionnaire to identify high-risk foreign language students includes a modified version appropriate to assessment of secondary school students. Suggestions for tests to determine students with learning disabilities are presented in Appendix B of this article; in addition, Ganschow, Pohlman, and Sparks (12) are preparing descriptions of procedures for diagnosing foreign language learning problems, as well as information about referral agencies.

At the present, there are several ways that those of us involved in the instruction of students with learning disabilities can be of assistance. First, it is important to recognize the indications that a student may have a disability. A frustrated student who says that he or she is trying but is unsuccessful in learning a foreign language is a possible candidate for further observation. If a student displays several characteristics of students with learning disabilities and exhibits frustration in the foreign language classroom, it would follow that the student be referred for consultation.

In the foreign language classroom, it is possible to assist students with learning disabilities directly by adopting approaches that meet their need for multisensory input. Methodological approaches that seem to be helpful to learners with a learning disability emphasize the importance of teaching through more than one modality (Bilyeu, 1; Gillingham, and Stillman, 18; Kennewig, 21). Bilyeu (1) emphasizes that the more teaching modalities one employs, the greater the chances for success. The two most common modalities are visual and auditory; however, use of the kinesthetic (gesturing) and tactile (touching) modalities may help students who have auditory or visual deficits. The Orton-Gillingham approach (Gillingham and Stillwell, 18), commonly used to

teach reading to learning disabled students, incorporates the kinesthetic and tactile modalities. A modified version of this approach has met with success in teaching Spanish to learning disabled students (Kennewig, 21). Kennewig conducts class in Spanish but slows the pace of the presentation of material and includes multisensory activities on a regular basis. On a daily basis Kennewig individualizes instruction by slowing the pace and providing for mastery learning. Students work at the blackboard and are given extensive practice in phonetics, spelling, grammar, conversation, and reading. Flashcards, filmstrips, and transparencies are frequently used in class.

To integrate such characteristics of individualized instruction into the regular foreign language classroom is possible, especially with the help of modern technology. With accommodations, the student with an identified or unidentified learning disability will be able to learn a foreign language. The work of addressing the problems of the SLD student is underway, and the prospects for meeting the needs of this special population are hopeful. As learner diversity increases in foreign language classrooms, the urgency of the task touches everyone involved—the student, the learning disability specialist, and the foreign language teacher.

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Appendix A

Variables Analyzed in Myer Study (27)

Criterion Variables: Aptitude Phase

A. Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery
   1. Sound Discrimination (PLAB[5])
   2. Sound-Symbol Association (PLAB[6])
   3. Auditory Total (PLABTOT)

B. Myer Syllable Discrimination Test
   4. Count
   5. Accent

Predictor Variables: Aptitude Phase

C. Gordon Musical Aptitude Profile
   1. Tonal Imagery, Part I: Melody (T^1—TONAL)
   2. Rhythm Imagery, Part I: Tempo (R^1—TEMPO)
   3. Rhythm Imagery, Part II: Meter (R^2—METER)
   4. Rhythm Imagery, Total (RHYTHMTOT)
   5. Musical Sensitivity, Part I: Phrasing (S^1—SENSITIV)
   6. Total (MAPTOT)

D. Iowa Test of Basic Skills
   7. Vocabulary
   8. Reading
   9. Language: Spelling
   10. Language: Usage
   11. Language: Total
   12. Work Study Skills: Visual Materials
   13. Work Study Skills: Total
   14. Mathematics: Concepts
   15. Mathematics: Problems
   16. Mathematics: Computation
   17. Mathematics: Total
   18. Iowa Composite

E. Personal Background Questionnaire
   19. Musical Experience
   20. Sex
   21. Handedness

Achievement Phase

In the achievement phase, the criterion and predictor variables of the aptitude phase served as predictors of foreign language achievement in French, German, or Spanish. Two auditory foreign language achievement scores were used. (1) Auditory Total (AUDTOT), consisting of Part I A (Oral Multiple Choice with a Drawing) and B (Oral Multiple Choice, question/choice of answer format) and Part II (Sound-Symbol Association), and Part III (Dictation); and (2) Auditory Question/Written Personal Response (AUD IV).

Appendix B

*Representative Tests for Identifying Students With Learning Disabilities**

Test Instrument	*Publisher*	*Abilities and Skills Measured*	*Age Norms*
Benton Visual Retention Test	The Psychological Corporation 757 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Visual processing	8—Adult
Goldman-Fristoe-Woodcock Auditory Skills Battery	American Guidance Service, Inc. Publishers' Building Circle Pines, MI 55014	Auditory processing	4—Adult
Gray Oral Reading Test.	Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc. 4300 West 62nd Street Indianapolis, IN 46268	Oral reading	1—College
Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT)	The Psychological Corporation 757 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	Ability to learn a foreign language	Secondary—Adult
Nelson Denny Reading Test (or California or IOWA reading tests) (timed and untimed scores)	Houghton-Mifflin 1900 South Batavia Avenue Geneva, IL 60134	Vocabulary, comprehension, reading rate	College level
Test of Adolescent Language (TOAL)	PRO-Ed 5341 Industrial Oaks Blvd. Austin, TX 78735	Listening, reading, writing, speaking	11—18

Writing sample (250 words minimum)
*This test battery was modified from Mangrum and Strichart (26).

Test Instrument	*Publisher*	*Abilities and Skills Measured*	*Age Norms*
Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (WAIS-R)	The Psychological Corporation 757 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017	General mental abilities: 6 verbal and 5 nonverbal subtests	16—Adult
Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)	Jastak Associates, Inc. 1526 Gilpin Avenue Wilmington, DE 19806	Reading, spelling, and mathematics	5—Adult
Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery (WJPEB) Part I: Tests of Achievement	Teaching Resources Corp. 50 Pond Park Rd. Hingham, MA 02043	Achievement: Letter-word identification, word-attack, passage comprehension, calculation, applied math problems, dictation, proofing, science, social studies, humanities	3—Adult
Woodcock Johnson Psychoeducational Battery (WJPEB) Part II: Test of Cognitive Ability	Teaching Resources Corp. 50 Pond Park Rd. Hingham, MA 02043	Reasoning, comprehension, practical judgment, verbal ability, time and space relationships, number ability, auditory attentive ability, visual attentive ability, memory	3—Adult